

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were Chair Zach Bergeron, members Jay Doherty, Joan Duff, Ann Knowles and Associate Member Steve Pouliot; also present was Paul Materazzo, Director of Planning.

Shawsheen Square Rezoning:

Mr. Bergeron opened the continued discussion on the Shawsheen Square Zoning. He stated that the Board saw this as an opportunity to improve the area, and this discussion is for the residents to let the Board know what they would and would not like to see in the area.

Mr. Materazzo reviewed his previous presentation on the existing zoning, showing the three different zoning districts coming together in one area. He stated this does not provide a cohesive rhythm on how the corridor should be planned out. The area being considered for a change is the frontage of Haverhill Street from Shawsheen Square to the railroad bridge, not White Shawsheen. He noted that there are known traffic issues and combined with the deficient infrastructure, land values are affected and development is restricted.

Mr. Materazzo stated that after the last meeting a working group of residents was formed to explore the area further. What came out immediately from the group was that the area of White Shawsheen should stay residentially zoned. The group saw opportunities for recycling and repositioning buildings in the Industrial area with mixed use or general business. At Brickstone Square, the group saw a potential for mixed use along the frontage of Haverhill and York Streets.

Mr. Materazzo showed each area as separate character districts. Character District 1 was comprised of the Industrial A District on the North side of Haverhill Street. The working group suggested that the current height allowance of 60 ft be changed to 35 ft along Haverhill Street with scaling to go up to the allowed 60 ft. The working group suggested taking out the currently allowed noxious uses and possibly adding mixed use, commercial and residential.

Shaun Duffy of 24 Riverina Road felt the working group does not represent the entire interest of the neighborhood. Denser activity or development will add to problematic traffic in the area. Mr. Materazzo stated that this may be an opportunity to partner with a private developer to help fix the current traffic conditions. He added that any development that came before the Board would have to provide a detailed traffic analysis, and offsite mitigation may be required. Mr. Duffy felt a traffic study is not needed as the area is obviously jam packed and Shawsheen square is extremely dangerous. Mr. Materazzo stated that the Town is currently working on a corridor study from the Haverhill Street Bridge to Route 93. The Town recently received \$150,000.00 from the Rolling Green 40B development for plans to redesign Shawsheen Square. Any future developer would be expected to contribute to mitigation.

Phyllis Zimmerman of 9 Carisbrooke Street questioned who was part of the working group. She added there is no control over what goes into a General Business zone, and property values will be affected by anything that goes into the area. Mr. Materazzo noted that extending the General Business District was originally considered, but after the last Board meeting and resident working group meetings, an overlay district is now being contemplated. An overlay district would be specific to the area for use, scale and density.

Shawsheen Square Rezoning (cont'd):

Georgeann Keer of 5 York Street asked why this was not considered as an opportunity for the Town to have more open space. The dam removal project is beginning and other uses that can add to the character of the neighborhood can be considered that would be less intrusive. She is shocked at the push for development instead of open space. Mr. Materazzo stated that the working group is looking at an overlay district that would require open space.

Kim Grady of 10 Argyle Street asked why the Planning Board doing this now. Mr. Materazzo stated that flexibility in the zoning is Town's Master Plan, and some Industrial property owners made an informal inquiry about flexibility. Ms. Grady asked if the group that approached the Town got the ball rolling. Mr. Materazzo stated that this is something that the Town has been working on since approximately 2007 starting with the Shawsheen Renaissance Project.

Bob Cary of 7 Argyle Street stated the 2007 Renaissance Project was to repave the sidewalks, spruce the area up and make it nicer, not about rezoning. When nothing came of it he assumed the Town didn't have the money to go through with it. Mr. Materazzo stated that in 2007 the economy did not allow for that multi-million dollar project, but money that the Town has secured from other projects can now provide for a streetscape improvement plan to bring the square back to life. The zoning piece is a complementary piece.

Peggy Rambach of 1 Arundel Street stated that if any changes were made, she would like to see improvements like what was done in downtown Amesbury. She would like the Town use the natural resources to create enjoyable spaces for people to go and relax and have coffee. She would like for the area by the river to be opened up and beautified with the addition of artisan shops, small businesses, artist studios and cafes with new access to the River.

Mr. Bergeron asked Mr. Materazzo to show what uses are allowed in the IA District. Mr. Materazzo showed that by right the district would allow a contractor's yard, wholesale storage warehousing and warehousing.

Frank McNally of 5 York Street stated that the vacant properties will gain value if they are rezoned General Business. When the property values go up the Town will have very little control of what goes there. He asked why not put an overlay district in place to keep out uses that they would not want. Mr. Materazzo stated that the working group is looking at an overlay district to pick the uses that people would like to see in the area.

Stephanie Clement of 10 Carisbrooke Street felt that that it sounded great to have cafes and places to sit along the River but she knows from comments of people who live on Riverina, that this leads to rat problems and dumpsters.

Don Robb of 36 York Street asked how much of the land is private and how much is Town owned. Mr. Materazzo stated that the Town owns a pumping station in the area but the rest is privately owned. Mr. Robb then asked what provisions would be made to preserve the historic character of the area and the buildings that are still there, as most of the buildings from the 1920s are still there. Mr. Materazzo asked Eric Daum, a member of the working group to address this question. Eric Daum of 15 Carlise Street stated that he is an architect and was a member of the

Shawsheen Square Rezoning (cont'd):

Shawsheen Renaissance group. He added that he has been looking at this neighborhood for a long time and appreciates William Wood's work. The working group feels that the baseline criteria should be that historic buildings won't be lost, that they should be rehabbed and repurposed. An overlay district would provide for the opportunity to do that type of development.

Mr. Materazzo moved on to Character District 2 which is Brickstone Square. He showed that the building on the site is 80 ft high and about 60% occupied. The suggestion of the working group is to limit the height to 35 ft along the frontages of York and Haverhill Streets to mirror the residential height limitations of the area, and change the limit further back on the parcel to 60 ft. The working group also felt that there is an opportunity for mixed use, commercial and residential.

Don Robb of 36 York Street asked if part of the existing buildings would have to be torn down if the height limitations are changed. Mr. Materazzo answered that existing buildings would be preexisting nonconforming, but any new buildings would have to conform to the new zoning.

Theresa Conlon of 17 York Street asked where people would park at Brickstone Square if the frontage is built on. Mr. Materazzo stated that part of this process could allow for shared parking or parking garages. Ms. Conlon noted that the building isn't full and cars park on the residential side streets. She asked what they will do with all of the cars when they are fully occupied. Mr. Materazzo stated that a new garage may help offset those spaces.

Vincent Bradley of 12 Arundel Street stated that the area is dense enough and cars are inundating their streets when Brickstone Square is only half full. He asked where the demand is for all of these buildings, when there is a lot of empty storefronts downtown. He added that what the residents have now is great and adding more cars, people and traffic will spoil the environment and historic character of the neighborhood. He feels this is just for the property interest of a handful of property owners. Mr. Materazzo stated from a planning perspective they are not looking to do this just for the private businesses, but to have this conversation with the residents to see what the Town can do to enhance this portion of the neighborhood to make their experience and where they live more dynamic.

Chris Jolly of 6 Carisbrooke Street stated that he moved to white Shawsheen from Charlestown for the quaintness of the area. He does not see any deficiencies of services. What he is concerned Balmoral Street will turn into a back alleyway of delivery trucks, dumpsters and cigarette breaks. He moved out of the city to get away from those types of things.

Mr. Materazzo showed Character District 3 which is the SRA zoned area south of Haverhill Street. He noted that the working group does not want to see any type of retail in this area. If the car dealership ever moves on this would be an opportunity to set the table to recycle that area to residential, as opposed to another car dealership coming in and continuing that type of use.

Don Robb of 36 York Street asked what the restrictions are now if the car dealership is sold. Mr. Materazzo stated that a new car dealership, single family homes or a senior living development

Shawsheen Square Rezoning (cont'd):

could go in that area. Mr. Robb asked if a commercial entity could go there and Mr. Materazzo stated that it could not.

Eleanor Storch of 18 Carisbrooke Street stated the Town needs to address the inconsistencies in the basic infrastructure of the neighborhood before other uses are allowed and other issues start popping up. The 2007 plan of an improved streetscape would be a good starting off point. Mr. Materazzo noted that if Ms. Storch gave him a list of issues he could pass it on to the Municipal Services Director. Ms. Storch stated that she wouldn't want a list to be addressed in a patchwork fashion; she would prefer that this be something that the Town embraces. She added that rents in Andover are high and it is hard to attract the types of businesses that they would want in their neighborhood. Mr. Materazzo noted that in Town there is not enough space and rents are high. Businesses want to come to Town but they can't find a space so they go to a neighboring community.

Victoria Henry of 15 Carisbrooke Street stated that she has been in the neighborhood since 1984 and she has seen a lot of changes, some of which were done without neighborhood input. The neighborhood is very cohesive. In the past the neighborhood had to hire an attorney to fight proposed soccer field lights that were different than what the Town had presented. She doesn't trust the Town to do the right thing. She loves her neighborhood and she wants it to stay the way it is now. She asked if big property owners on Haverhill Street want to sell the property and that is why this is all happening now. Mr. Materazzo noted that some properties that are literally falling down and repurposing those buildings under current zoning isn't financially feasible. These buildings don't add value to the neighborhood or the tax rolls. This proposal is to change from an Industrial use to something more pleasing for the neighborhood.

John Beaver of 9 York Street felt that a positive change would be to change all of the by right uses in the Industrial district to be changed to No. Mr. Materazzo asked if what he was hearing was that the neighborhood would prefer a residential zone of 15,000 s.f. lots or 5,000 s.f. lots consistent with White Shawsheen. Mr. Beaver stated that he brought this up because it doesn't seem like it was ever considered. He added that he bought a house in the neighborhood and it is not his problem if Industrial property owners cannot transfer their building into a robust use.

Georgeann Keer of 5 York Street stated that if Pandora's Box is opened it will create weekend traffic which will be a nightmare. The Town needs more housing for families like what is in Shawsheen Village instead of businesses. She added that she left the City to live in a Town, and checked the zoning to make sure that the car dealership would not be turned into a strip mall. Mr. Materazzo asked what she would like to see on those properties. Ms. Keer stated that she would like to see connection to the River and a park, less asphalt, more homes like hers and more kids. She loves her neighborhood and wants to protect it.

Brian Boatner of 100 Burnham Road asked why all the land in the area cannot be converted to SRA. Additional homes will not add to the traffic and will create more of a sense of community. He disagreed with Mr. Materazzo's comment that this would bring back life to Shawsheen Square because it is already very lively. Mr. Materazzo stated that the Board is trying to make

Shawsheen Square Rezoning (cont'd):

the area safer and bring back a more pedestrian feel. There's no reason why Shawsheen Square can't be a complimentary square to downtown.

Shaun Duffy of 24 Riverina Road stated that more homes would increase home values. He questioned how anything can be built in the area as it is a flood zone and would have to be put on stilts. Mr. Materazzo noted that Powder Mill Square is right next to the Shawsheen River and the buildings are on stilts and have garages that allow for flood waters to flow in and out.

Vincent Bradley of 12 Arundel Street stated that this goes to the competence of the Town. If the Town really wanted to help the neighborhood, they would already have the streetscape improvements. There are dilapidated properties under the railroad bridge and the Town can't do anything about it. The Town needs to show that they can make improvements to the neighborhood before facilitating private development that will destroy the character of the neighborhood. Mr. Materazzo stated that what he is hearing is that the neighborhood would like the Town to focus on the streetscape first which may help to set the table for a more detailed discussion on the zoning.

Don Rodd of 36 York Street suggested that the three separate approaches presented are too much to consider at one time. The Board should create a plan just for the strip along the River as an interesting place to start. There is available off-street parking and the buildings could be rehabbed into acceptable uses. Then Town can look at fixing the traffic in Shawsheen Square.

Eric Daum of 15 Carlisle Street stated that the neighborhood was originally conceived as mixed use. If nothing is done, things that the neighborhood doesn't like will go into the area. This is an opportunity to direct development, preserve aspects that their neighborhood loves, and enhance other areas. He added that rezoning the area on the south side of Haverhill Street has never been part of the conversation. It will remain single residence and any future development would be houses. He would hate for people to be so resistant to development that they stop something good from happening.

Phyllis Zimmerman of 9 Carisbrooke Street stated that at a previous Town Meeting, the Town voted for 12 ft high streetlights to flood the track for ice skating for children in the wintertime. The neighborhood was happy with that proposal. The Selectmen secretly changed what was voted on at Town Meeting to stadium lights to rent the field out late at night to adult sports teams. The neighbors had to hire two attorneys and file a lawsuit to stop it. Another Town Manager wanted to put the Town Yard in the neighborhood. Mr. Materazzo noted that right now a Town Yard or a contractor's yard is an allowed use in the area. Ms. Zimmerman emphasized that she wants the Town to leave the south side of Haverhill Street alone.

Rebecca Or-Shahar of 3 York Street asked Mr. Daum if he has ownership interest in the old building behind Bank of New England. Mr. Daum stated that the building is the former creamery and the only interest he has in it is for the Georgian revival architecture that he would like restored. Ms. Or-Shahar stated that she understands that the Town has an interest in increasing taxes and the property owners want to be profitable but it can't come at the expense of the neighbors. She wants her children to be able to have free range of the neighborhood without

Shawsheen Square Rezoning (cont'd):

being worried about strangers and traffic. Brickstone Square traffic cuts through the neighborhood very fast to avoid Route 28, and any development would lead to more traffic in the neighborhood that they will not be protected from.

Mr. Bergeron noted that this conversation needs to happen if people in the neighborhood want single family homes to replace the dealership if it ever moves on, or if they want something better than dilapidated buildings on the north side of Haverhill Street. The intent is to keep the characteristics of the originally designed Shawsheen Village.

Brian McCool of 14 Arundel Street asked what the point is of changing the area to General Business if everyone wants it to be SRA. Mr. Materazzo noted that the conversation of General Business began as a starting point in the summer but after conversations with some neighbors, it was decided not to extend the General Business to that current SRA zone. Mr. Bergeron explained the development process with an overlay district.

Steve Pouliot noted that everyone seems to want to protect homes and have greenspace. An overlay could keep another car dealership out. He added the Town should also have a plan to better the neighborhood including repaving the sidewalks, but he doesn't want to give false expectations that single family homes will be built on the north side of Haverhill Street because the properties are privately owned.

Bill Buckley stated that he was representing JPNR Realty LLC which owns the 2.2 acre site at 16 Haverhill Street and they own the vacant building referred to as the creamery. He stated that they have asked the Town what they would like to see in the creamery building. The building is in rough shape but they would love to save it. Currently at 16 Haverhill Street they have doctor and dentist offices, and any alterations in the building are a two month process before the Zoning Board of Appeals. What attracted the property owners to the buildings was the quaintness of the neighborhood, and they would not want to negatively impact it. They are currently analyzing uses for the creamery building. They would like to accommodate a use that complements the neighborhood. They would like to explore the idea of an overlay district more with the neighbors. Sometimes the highest and best use for a space goes elsewhere because the process is not streamlined.

Don Robb of 36 York Street stated that no one would be able to afford the flood insurance on the parcel next to the Shawsheen. He would like to see a controlled commercial use working with the property owners.

After the discussion on Shawsheen Square Ms. Duff left the meeting and did not return.

254 Lowell Street:

Mr. Bergeron opened the continued public hearing on an application submitted by National Development Acquisitions, LLC for a Special Permit for Elderly Housing for a proposed development at 254 Lowell Street at the former Strawberry Hill Farm.

254 Lowell Street (cont'd):

On a motion by Mr. Pouliot seconded by Mr. Doherty the Board continued without discussion the public hearing on 254 Lowell Street the Special Permit for Elderly Housing to December 9, 2014 at 8:00 PM. **Vote:** Unanimous (4-0).

Other Business:

Mr. Materazzo informed the Board that a communication was received from an abutter about a project that has not yet come before the Board. The project is an assisted living facility off of Elm Street that is on the Board's agenda next week. The abutter stated that he intends to bring 100-200 people to the meeting and requested the Board consider continuing the meeting without discussion to a future date. Mr. Materazzo noted that this Board, the Selectmen and other Boards have conducted business the week of Thanksgiving. It is the Board's choice if they would like to continue the meeting.

Mr. Materazzo stated the abutter also requested the meeting be moved to a room that can handle 100-200 people. Mr. Materazzo noted that as the Board has yet to have a hearing on this matter, he is unsure how many people will attend, so it is up to the Board to decide if they would like to change the procedure.

Mr. Materazzo also noted that the abutter has requested to present an hour long PowerPoint presentation to the Board as to why the proposal should not be considered. Mr. Materazzo noted that in speaking to the Chair it had been decided not to change the procedures until after the first hearing. Mr. Doherty stated that if there are going to be that many people he would prefer to be in a room like at the library and knowing that Ms. Duff will not be at the next meeting he would prefer that the Board have all hands on deck. The Board discussed upcoming meeting dates and agenda items. Mr. Materazzo noted that because the meeting has been advertised and noticed, the Board has to open the meeting on the 25th, but can continue it without discussion in order to meet time regulations of opening a meeting. Mr. Pouliot suggested moving the meeting of December 23rd to December 16th. Mr. Materazzo stated that he would check for availability of a large room on December 16th and get back to the Board. The Board agreed to allow the abutter 10-15 minutes to make a presentation.

Meeting Minutes:

On a motion by Mr. Doherty seconded by Mr. Pouliot the Board moved to accept the minutes of August 12, 2014, August 26, 2014, September 16, 2014 and September 23, 2014. **Vote:** Unanimous (4-0).

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.